GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EARTH SCIENCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2472
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2008
RESEARCH CENTRE IN ANTARCTICA
Thakur Shri Anurag Singh

Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to establish a new research centre in Antarctica;

(b) the number of scientists working in research centres at present;

(c) whether the extreme weather conditions have caused any deaths there since 1981;

(d) if so, the details thereof, year-wise;

(e) the annual budget allocated for the research centre located at Antarctica;

(f) whether the Government proposes to increase the budget and number of scientist for these centres; and

(g) if so the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES(SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) Yes, the Government proposes to establish a new research station in Antarctica in Prydz Bay, Eastern Antarctica which lies between Broknes and Stornes penninsula in the Larsemann Region.

(b) The number of scientists at present (as on date) working in the present research station 'Maitri' is 13.

(c-d) No deaths have occurred due to extreme weather conditions in Antarctica. However, three scientists and Naval communication personnel lost their lives in 1990 due to carbon monoxide poisoning while there were in an interior camp at Humboldt.

(e) The annual budget allocated for 2008-09 for the Indian Antarctic Programme is Rs.44.50 Crore which includes expenditure related to chartering of ship and helicopters and maintenance of infrastructure facilities at Maitri.

(f-g) Yes Sir.The ministry is considering the proposal for increasing the budget as also the number of scientists for the concerned nodal agency namely the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research at Goa to cater to the scientific and logistics activities which have got increased many fold due to maintaining two research bases at Antarctica.